

“Be the Change You Wish to See...”

Learning communities within learning communities: Benefits for students and faculty

Authors: Barbara Sheline, MD, MPH; Victoria Kaprielian, MD
 Department of Community and Family Medicine, Duke University

Aims:

- Recognize the concept of a learning community as an important concept for both faculty and students
- Appreciate that best student practices will result from faculty engaging in best practice behavior

Program description:

The Practice Course at the Duke School of Medicine, the required doctor-patient course, establishes learning communities of eight or nine students with two faculty facilitators who meet throughout the first two years of medical school. The weekly faculty meeting offered an opportunity to create a learning community where faculty actively engage in learning from each other.

The major goal of the Practice Course is to develop medical students who can communicate effectively. With this goal in mind, we have adopted the basic tenets of Motivational Interviewing: respectful listening/evoking, collaboration, and supporting autonomy. In a parallel process, we apply these tenets to our work with faculty, who in turn apply these tenets as a model of the skills and attitudes we hope the students will assume as they learn to care for patients.

MI Tenets	Faculty	Students	Patients
Respectful Listening/Evoking	Allow faculty to share their teaching challenges in the weekly faculty meeting	Listen to student concerns (i.e. list pros and cons of role play before engaging in role play in class)	Listen for ambivalence and resistance
Collaboration	Faculty share solutions to challenges from their own experiences	Students are given responsibility for giving each other feedback on communication skills. Feedback on the class is solicited weekly.	Encourage a partnership role grounded in the point of view of the patient
Supporting Autonomy	Encourage faculty to try out unique ways of reaching curricular goals.	Students direct small group discussion sessions in Year 2	Recognize the true power for change rests with the patient

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References

Hatem CJ, Lown BA, Newman LR. Strategies for creating a faculty fellowship in medical education: Report of a 10-year experience. *Academic Medicine* 2009; 84(8):1098-103.

Pollack KI, Childers, JW, Arnold, RM. Applying Motivational Interviewing Techniques to Palliative Care Communication. *Journal of Palliative Medicine* 2011; 14 (5): 587-592.